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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **El Paso Sector Agents Seizure Marijuana, Ecstasy Pills and Crystal Methamphetamine in Busy Holiday Weekend**

*Agents in Alamogordo, Fort Hancock and Ysleta Seize Drugs in Three Incidents*

**EL PASO, Texas** --El Paso Sector agents in west Texas and New Mexico were busy over the holiday weekend period seizing more than \$1 million in marijuana, ecstasy pills, and cocaine in three separate incidents.

The first seizure occurred just before noon Saturday when agents at the traffic checkpoint on Highway 70, south of Alamogordo located 721 pounds of marijuana in boxes located in the trailer of a 2000 model tractor-trailer rig. The discovery was made after agents became suspicious about the load of lettuce being transported by the truck driver, identified as a 36-year old resident from Los Angeles, California. A Border Patrol canine alert led agents to a locked trailer that contained several brown boxes. After opening the trailer, agents could smell a strong odor of marijuana. In the boxes, agents found 13 large cellophane bundles full of contraband. The contraband, truck and subject was turned over to the custody of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in Las Cruces.

On Sunday morning, agents in Ysleta, Texas, located 1,397 doses of the designer drug-ecstasy and arrested two Lubbock residents at the traffic checkpoint east of El Paso on Highway 62/180. Agents also found more than \$1,600 in suspected drug cash and .125 pounds of methamphetamine in the same incident. Agents could smell a strong odor of air freshener when the two occupants of a 1991 GMC "Jimmy" Blazer pulled into the checkpoint. Once referred to secondary inspection, a canine was summoned which alerted on driver's side door. During the course of questioning, agents located the ecstasy pills on one of the subjects, after a packages fell from his pants legs. The other subject voluntarily revealed additional packages of the drug, in addition to the stash of crystal "meth". More than \$1,600 in suspected drug cash was also found in their possession.

The total value of the three seizures is approximately \$1.1 million. The two 21-year old Lubbock residents, the Blazer and the drug cash were turned over to DEA-El Paso for further disposition.

Agents at Fort Hancock early Sunday morning also found a sizeable load of marijuana that was abandoned in several burlap bags near I-10, 23 miles east of the Fort Hancock Port of Entry. The seizure was made after agents followed animal and tennis shoe tracks that led to Interstate 10. A Border Patrol helicopter pilot was also dispatched to assist. Agents arrived at the location where two mules and several burlap bundles were found. The contraband was turned over to DEA-El Paso. The animals were turned over to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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